Contending for the Faith

Brothers and sisters God is making some things very clear to me in scripture that I must share. These are things that we must settle in our hearts now before the real persecution comes to our lands. We must resolve that we will contend for the faith no matter what the earthly cost. And that means we must warn others and tell them the truth, even when we know they don't want to hear it.

> **Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.**
> **Matthew 10:34 (KJV)**

A few weeks ago the World Council of Churches working in tandem with two other organizations issued a set of suggested evangelism guidelines for Christians and Catholics titled: **"Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World"**. They make some nice suggestions, although some are painfully obvious (don't condone violence, refrain from offering financial incentives et al.).

Although never addressed directly I sense that there's an undercurrent of appeasement towards the Muslim faith in this document, and an implication that they should adopt similar tactics. I don't see that happening. This document speaks of showing love and mutual respect to others of differing beliefs. Although this is all very warm and fuzzy, there are two essential elements of our gospel which it fails to address.

> **Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.**
> **Acts 5:28-29 (KJV)**

The bible tells that our gospel is both an offense and foolishness to unbelievers (**1 Corinthians 1:18 KJV**). Indeed, one of the many names of Christ is the "Rock of Offense" (**Romans 9:33 KJV**). Why is the gospel an offense? It's because there are two things that we must get across to every unbeliever, things that they do not want to hear. And contrary to the belief of some these are absolutely essential to the salvation message.

- They Are Wrong.
- They Are Headed to Hell!

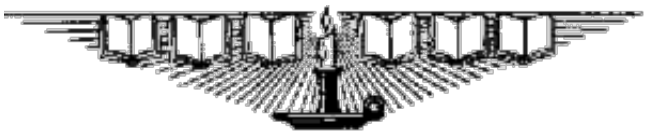
After all is said and done there really is no easy way to say it. Whatever path they are on that does not lead to Christ is simply wrong, and the consequences of being wrong are that they are headed straight to a very real and literal Hell! Our great commission is to 'preach the gospel to every creature' (**Mark 16:15 KJV**) and that gospel includes not just sharing the great love of Jesus Christ for us sinners but warning of the peril of Hell awaiting those who reject His love.

It is these two points which are so often left out of the gospel that leads many into a false conversion experience. Their salvation is lightly regarded because there are no real consequences for unbelief. Without the concept of

Hell there is little fear of God. The love gospel is incomplete because it is based on a cheap grace.

> **But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;**
> **Matthew 10:17 (KJV)**

This is just the beginning folks, the emerging world church will increasingly attempt to guide and control how and where the gospel of Jesus Christ is spread. Will you bow your knee to any denomination or organization, or will you remain true to the faith? Two thousand years ago the apostle Paul wrote his own guidelines for evangelism that we would do well to imitate. It is very short so I suggest you memorize it:

> **Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.**
> **2 Timothy 4:2 (KJV)**

I encourage every Christian reading this to reject all forms of restraint that men would try to impose on the preaching of the gospel both now and in the future. Instead I suggest that we determine in our hearts to submit ourselves wholly to God's Word and the guidance of the Holy Spirit in this matter. Remember the 'simple yet profound' statement of Peter to those who would curtail the spreading of the gospel: "We ought to obey God rather than men".